

1952

Senator Mike Mansfield Korea

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches

Recommended Citation

Mansfield, Mike 1903-2001, "Senator Mike Mansfield Korea" (1952). *Mike Mansfield Speeches*. 66.
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/mansfield_speeches/66

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Mike Mansfield Papers at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mike Mansfield Speeches by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

1952

My Fellow Montanans.

Tonight I want to talk to you about Korea.

Why are we fighting in Korea? What were the events that led to it? What is the history of this chapter in our lives?

And -- since this is a political campaign and it is perhaps inevitable that sly and ugly distortions of the Truth are being made in an attempt to turn this serious problem of Korea into an orgy of vote-getting -- I want to talk about Mike Mansfield and the "China Report" of 1945.

My opponent -- whose solution to the Korean crisis/^{seriously}frightens me and I am sure frightens you equally -- has tried to create an impression that my China Report somehow, sometime, has had something to do with Korea. His followers, since they have no record of performance in the Senate to brag about, much less talk about, have had to initiate him and parrot his remarks throughout this campaign.

Now I would not discuss this at all if I did not think that my new friends in the eastern district of Montana were not entitled to hear from me my views ~~and~~ on Korea and the facts on the China Report.

I know the people of the western district do not need to hear these facts. The fact of the matter is they have heard these same sly distortions, these same innuendoes, uttered by various scandal-mongers through four different campaigns. In the elections of 1946, 1948, 1950 and now in 1952, this same old claptrap has been peddled through western Montana about Mike Mansfield. I have been honored and I am proud

that in these campaigns the people of western Montana have shown by their votes that they have the good sense to recognize a "phony" issue when they see one.

Now, let's get to the facts:

In 1945, President Franklin Roosevelt called me to the White House and requested that I go to China on a special mission for him. He told me that he had received military and economic reports but that he wished to find out the situation from an impartial and unbiased angle. He knew that I had served as a United States Marine in China. Since my Country was at war I accepted this presidential assignment and immediately flew abroad. I spent seven weeks in India, Burma, and China, riding the bucket seats in military planes; and I rode the Ledo Road in Burma in a jeep and flew the Hump.

I returned to Washington in January 1945, made my report to President Roosevelt and the Congress. The Great Falls Tribune was the only Montana paper to publish the report and it did so in full.

It seems that my previous Republican opponents and now the present Republican opponent have in each campaign tried to tell you that somewhere in that report I said the Chinese Communists were "agrarian reformers".

Let's look at the record -- in this case the Report itself. Speaking of agrarian reforms, I stated that I was neither a military nor a China expert and that I was going to be candid and truthful. In that report I stated that the interests of the Chinese Communists "seem to focus on agrarian reforms". Why doesn't my opponent tell you if he has read the Report

-- and I doubt it -- that what I do say in that Report is that General Frank Merrill, the military hero of Merrill's Marauders in Burma told me -- and I quote General Merrill, that in his opinion (the Communists) "were primarily a Chinese agrarian group interested in land and tax reforms". That was General Merrill speaking, not Mike Mansfield.

In my report I praised the efforts of General Al Wedemeyer, Ambassador Pat Hurley, and Donald Nelson, head of WPB, for the great work they were doing. I stated also that Chiang Kai-Shek, the Nationalist leader and bitter anti-communist then as well as now, was the best man to head the Chinese government. I stated that he should have our full support and we should assist him to the limit. He was the head of the lawful Chinese government then and he is the head of the lawful Chinese government now. There has been no change in my opinion of Chiang or the Nationalist Government and in every measure before the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the Congress he and his government have received my full support.

I received some interesting comments in 1945 on my Report. They are letters which I now have in my hand and I will be glad to show them to my opponent any time he wants. For example, on March 14, 1945, General Wedemeyer, who was as you remember the American General in charge in China and who himself wrote a famous report on China for the American Government, wrote to me:

"Dear Mike:

The sound judgment and objectiveness of your observations on China make this report of particular

value to the young men who are helping me.

Sincerely,

Al "

The World War II Secretary of War Robert Patterson also wrote me on March 19, 1945:

"Dear Mike:

Your estimate of the situation in China
is the best summary that I have seen.

Sincerely yours,

Bob "

Speaking of Communists being forced into the Nationalist government of China, it might be interesting to the people of Montana, and I will bet it is a great surprise to my opponent that General Pat Hurley, the Republican Secretary of War in the Hoover Cabinet and Ambassador to China at the time of my reports said, in a speech before the Washington Press Club on November 29, 1945 -- long after my report was published in January, 1945, that:

"The only difference between Chinese Communists
and Oklahoma Republicans is that the Oklahoma
Republicans are not armed."

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~, Where is Hurley now? He is the Republican candidate for Senator in New Mexico.

Furthermore, Hurley said, and I quote from the record:

"Before the Yalta Conference I suggested to
President Roosevelt a plan to force the Nationalist government, that is of China, to make more political concessions in order to make possible a settlement with the Communists. The President

did not approve the suggestion."

As my opponent knows, Wedemeyer and Hurley are strong Taft Republicans -- just as he is. In fact, General Wedemeyer campaigned all through Montana a few months ago for Senator Taft's nomination just as my opponent did. They worked hand in hand then and now my opponent finds that his favorite General agreed on China with Mike Mansfield! This must be a bitter blow to him!

About the United States Government -- including me -- wanting Chiang to take Communists into his government, my opponent is entirely mistaken and he knows it. I have another letter from General Wedemeyer which may be of interest in answering my opponent's false statement. This is from Wedemeyer, it is dated July 12, 1945 and it reads as follows:

"Dear Mike:

I think, therefore, the three Great Powers should collaborate in a document to the Central government and the Communists indicating unanimity in approach and adding that unless these two factions make appropriate compromises and get together, all Allied support will be withdrawn and China can accept the consequences which inevitably will be internal Chaos and revolution."

That was Wedemeyer, not Mike Mansfield who said that. In December 1945, Wedemeyer, MacArthur, and Admiral Spruance sent the following message to Washington:

"It is suggested that U. S. assistance to China be made available as a basis for negotiations

by the American Ambassador to bring together and effect a compromise between the major opposing groups in order to promote a unified democratic China."

Spruance, MacArthur and Wedemeyer sent that message and wanted Chiang to take in the Communists. Mike Mansfield did not.

These Republican Generals are not Communists and, to use a favorite phrase of my opponent, "they never have been".

My opponent tinkers with the truth too easily. The record speaks for itself and I can prove every statement I have made and my opponent knows it. The truth hurts none except those that misuse it.

Now let's talk about Korea. In June 1948 when the proposal to withdraw American occupation troops then in Korea was advanced, I strongly objected. I warned of the grave consequences that may follow and that in fact did follow. I did so in the Foreign Affairs Committee and I did so publicly on the House Floor. Did my opponent say anything at the time on the Senate Floor? No, he went right along with the withdrawal of our troops.

But my protest was not listened to. When the North Koreans invaded South Korea two years ago I was called to the White House in that first fateful week on two occasions. I was there with Senators Bridges of New Hampshire, Wherry of Nebraska and Smith of New Jersey, all of them Republican Senators and the Republican Leader. When President Truman told us he had ordered a Regimental Combat Team into Pusan not one of the Republican leaders objected. And did my opponent say anything then -- at that time? Did he say

anything on the Senate Floor or to the President? No, he did not! He was c ompletely silent.

Now, what we are fighting in Korea is Communist aggression, ord ered, planned and supervised by Russia. Make no mistake ab out it. If you ask why we are fighting there the best answer I can give you is the one given by Capt. Jabara, the first great jet ace of the war in Korea. When asked that question by reporters in his home town of Wichita, Kansas, Capt. Jabara said:

"So we won't have to fight in Wichita".

We have three choices in Korea:

1. Get out.

If we do this the next question is where the next Commun-ist move will be and what we will do about it. It would come soon, make no mistake about that either. Do we then give in to Communist aggression again, and then again and again and let them take the whole world, piece by piece, until they reach the United States and Montana? Even my opponent doesn't advocate this choice.

2. Stay as we are.

We must try to work out an honorable truce and keep build-
ing our military strength and the strength of our Allies so that if and when a showdown comes, we will be ready. The Communists understand and listen to only one thing -- superior force.

3. Go ahead to the Yalu and beyond into Red China.

If we do, we play stalin's game right down the middle. We get involved in a huge general war with China. If we do win it do we then occupy China and lose Western Europe in the meantime? We will really pay taxes then and we will have

regimentation, real dictatorship, and a garrison state in the United States. And eventually, after we have been bled white, we will have to face the final showdown with the real enemy, the Soviet Union.

Now let me make this unmistakably clear. Both presidential candidates -- General Eisenhower and Governor Stevenson -- are against this third course of action and both of them have said so for two years. Is my opponent against General Eisenhower as well as Mike Mansfield? I would like to hear his answer on this. There is hard fighting in Korea now but there will be World War III if this third course is followed.

This is a time in American ~~hazz~~ history when we must think -- long, hard, and carefully. Like the American Revolution, "this is a time to try men's souls". The man who offers you an easy way, a quick and cheap way out, is making a fool of himself and he will make one of you if you follow him. The only way to win World War III is to prevent it!

Now, where does my opponent stand on Korea? He made no speeches of any kind on Korea in the Senate to let his constituents know. I find, however, according to the Great Falls Tribune of May 19, 1951 that in Bozeman:

"Senator Zales N. Ecton last night advocated carrying the war to China with all our might."

So you have your choice -- Eisenhower, Stevenson and Mansfield advocate the present course of action. My opponent advocates all out war.

~~Both my opponent and I are carrying our past records,~~

My opponent also complains in this campaign about sending equipment abroad to arm our western Allies in Europe. Well, lets take another look at the record. According to the Congressional Record of July 21, 1949, page 10114, he has voted to ratify the North Atlantic Treaty, The House, and therefore Mike Mansfield, have nothing to do with ratifying the North Atlantic Treaty. The Constitution leaves that solely to the Senate. But after my opponent voted for this treaty he has since taken the decidedly unusual stand of refusing to implement it. He has done so even though this treaty is, under the Constitution, part of the law of the land. If any of you question my last statement I refer you to the language of Article VI of the Constitution of the United States which reads as follows:

"This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land."

Does my opponent believe in the Constitution. I do and I prove it by Supporting all laws on the statute books of the land. Why doesn't he?

Both my opponent and I are carrying our past records, our beliefs and our views to the people of Montana. You are the ultimate judges. Yours is the final decision as to whom will be your next Senator. I can ask only that you look both records over carefully and honestly and judge us by what we have done or failed to do. As far as I am concerned

I have appreciated your faith and confidence in me over the years, and win or lose, I am going to tell you the Truth and the Truth only in all my dealings with you.

And now, with these words, my part in the campaign for the great office of the United States Senator for Montana comes to an end. Tomorrow is election day and you play your part. Your role is far more important for you have the power of decision.

I have argued my case before you for the last six weeks. I have set before the people of Montana my record of ten years as a Montana Congressman. I am proud of that record of accomplishments for my beloved State, whether I win or whether I lose.

I would like to end this campaign by saying to you that -- although I have never fully succeeded in doing so -- I have tried to live up to the standards of Montana's greatest statesman, the world famous, the late Senator Thomas J. Walsh. You will find his words engraved on his tombstone in Helena. They are:

This is Mike Mansfield speaking. .Thanking my fellow Montanans. Good night and God bless you.